

TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

APRIL 2009



WHAT IS IRR?

The Indian Reservation Roads Program addresses transportation needs of tribes by providing funds for planning, designing, construction, and maintenance activities. The program is jointly administered by the Federal Highway Administration's Federal Lands Highway Office and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in accordance with an interagency agreement.



BACKGROUND

The Native American Liaison Branch (NALB) was created in 1999 within the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to serve as a liaison between Caltrans, tribal governments, and other third parties to promote government-to-government relations.

Over the past 10 years, it became clear that baseline tribal transportation facility system information and data need to be accurate and accessible to tribal governments. This information is critical for tribal governments to determine their current and long-range transportation needs, and to secure the resources needed to improve them. Consider that in fiscal year 2008, the 108 tribes in California received only 1.88 percent of the available Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) inventory funds.

To address this need for accurate transportation data and improve the competitive standing of California tribes to receive federal funding, the NALB secured funding for two important projects:

- The first project involved the participation of 77 tribes in the compilation of road and bridge data proposed to be included in the IRR inventory. Unfortunately, this project's efforts to potentially add 4,577 miles of new roads and 633 new bridges to the IRR inventory will not even maintain California's small and shrinking percentage of the IRR funding allocation.
- The second project involved 43 federally recognized tribes in the collection of additional transportation data and the preparation of needs assessment reports. Once completed, each participating tribe will be able to use their assessment report to develop long-range transportation plans and create a blueprint for roadway and transportation improvements.



2009/2010 TRIBAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND OUTREACH PROJECT

PURPOSE AND BENEFIT TO TRIBAL PARTICIPANTS

This 2009/2010 Tribal Needs Assessment and Outreach Project continues these recent efforts to obtain baseline transportation data by providing needs assessment reports to another 23 federally recognized California tribes. In addition to providing each tribe with a long-range transportation planning blueprint, the reports also are a valuable tool for tribal governments to use to access available funding outside the federal IRR Program.

The process to define these needs assessment reports will build upon previous efforts, allowing participating tribes to validate the previously collected transportation data. Through face-to-face meetings and a series of interactive workshops, tribes will be given the opportunity to directly participate in the identification, documentation and planning of transportation infrastructure that is vital to their future.

PROJECT QUICK FACTS

- 108 (20% or 1 in 5) federally recognized tribes in the continental U.S. reside in California
- Lack of transportation data for California tribes has restricted the amount of federal funding allocated to tribes.
- California tribes have fewer miles of roads and bridges in the IRR system, in comparison to other regions in the U.S.
- In 2007, California tribes had only 1,493 miles on the BIA IRR system, compared to 82,000 miles of roads nationally.
- In 2007, tribes in California had 183 bridges on the BIA bridge inventory system, representing just 4.06 percent of the national bridge inventory.



HOW TO CONTACT US...

For more information visit www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/orip/na/ or call (916) 651-6527.



“CONSIDER THAT IN FISCAL YEAR 2008, THE 108 TRIBES IN CALIFORNIA RECEIVED ONLY 1.88 PERCENT OF THE AVAILABLE IRR FUNDS.”

NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT COMPONENTS

This current Caltrans project includes the selection of 23 interested federally recognized California tribes that will work with Caltrans and the consultant team (IBI Group) to advance the needs assessment work plans. The plans will include the following elements:

- Community profile including demographics and land use
- Inventory of roadway/existing transportation infrastructure
- Transportation issues and needs
- Best practices of other tribal transportation improvements
- Comprehensive stakeholder consultation/outreach including on-site visits and discussions with tribal councils and community members
- Development and evaluation of service alternatives
- Documentation of results/inventory

TRIBAL INVOLVEMENT

As part of this project, a significant outreach program has been developed to complement the technical work being done for the project. Each of the 108 federally-recognized tribes in California are encouraged to participate in this project through a series of workshops that will provide valuable training and tools needed to develop transportation planning and compete for available funding sources. Three rounds of workshops will be held, covering the following topics and activities:

- Transportation issues and needs facing tribes
- Case studies of other tribes' transportation improvements
- Inventory of existing transportation infrastructure and conditions
- Identifying solutions
- Prioritizing projects
- Funding strategies
- Grant writing tools
- Developing long-range transportation plans and implementation strategies
- Working with Caltrans and other transportation agencies

SCHEDULE

This project is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2010, with much of the research work including roads inventory and development of community profiles completed during the first nine months. This initial effort will be followed by the development



and evaluation of service alternatives, identification of preferred approaches, and the preparation of draft and final reports. Over the course of the project, Caltrans will host a series of workshops that are tentatively scheduled to take place in the spring and fall of 2009 and in early 2010.